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An Effect On Cultural Identity: Dialect Altugan, Arzu * Tozun Issa

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Abstract

This study was carried out in North Cyprus to discuss the dialect differences of three cities in North Cyprus. Some geographical features of these cities were taken into consideration as well. This study was conducted with qualitative techniques. This study included a sample of a total 50 settlers of Turkish Cypriots from Nicosia, Famagusta and Omorphou whose ages ranged from 15 to 72. The study provided significant findings on the awareness of dialect, which has a big effect on cultural identity. According to the data, Cypriot Turks, after a lot of immigration, have different dialects in each city. It can be said each region has a variety of its own. The most effective factor on this is age. The old, the middle-aged and the youth of Cyprus have distinct dialects from each other. The dialect of the middle-aged people is closest to the standard but if they are educated. Consequently we can say education is another factor, but the youth tries to use the deepest Cyprus Turkish because they find it more sincere. Also they prefer to get into communication by using their own dialect.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Language, which is one of the elements of cultural identity, is important for the settlers of North Cyprus because the relationship, the sincerity between the people is precious for them due to the social, economic and political problems of the Northern Cyprus. It has been always known that islanders are more relaxed people (Fosland, 1984).

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In this paper, the dialects of Cyprus where the study areas are Lefkoşa, Güzelyurt and Famagusta, were examined. The researcher have studied and compared the dialects of these cities as a basis of a further study. Some languages can be seen more acceptable or better than other languages (Papapavlou, 2005). Although some phonetical and the grammatical, and geographical subjects are the focus of this paper, the different idioms and stories were found out as well.

Dialect which is ‘ a form of language that people speak in a particular part of a country, containing some different words and grammar etc.’ (Cambridge Dictionary, 2008) can be acquired in a social environment after a while. Therefore, Cyprus Turks, after a lot of immigration, have different dialects. Moreover, Cyprus has its own culture and literature.

This study will be a basis for a further study, which is to evaluate the effect of cultural identity on learning in North Cyprus. Therefore it is an interesting research not only for culture but also for education.

1.2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to study the dialects and geographical features of three main cities in North Cyprus, as they are important elements of cultural identity. The study areas are Nicosia, Omorphou and Famagusta. Although, the phonetical and the grammatical, and geographical subjects are the researcher’s focus, some interesting idioms and stories learnt during the research were given as well. Furthermore, the gypsy language, which is mostly common in Güzelyurt, was mentioned. Afterwards, these findings will be used to further explore a correlation between learning and cultural identity in a larger study.

The claim of phonological differences are supported by language use from three cities.

1.3.SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in Nicosia, Famagusta and Omorphou. The speech of inhabitants of these cities was taken into consideration. The number of investigated inhabitants is 50.

1.4.LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although, this paper explores the dialects of Nicosia, Famagusta and Omorphou, the main limitation of this study is that it only represents the Cypriot Turks.

The researcher would like to do a research about immigrants from other countries such as the mainland Turkey as well but it needs a bigger research.

1.5. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

The words that are used for Cypriot Turkish are then written in standard Turkish, and then their English synonymies were given as well.

Ex. Gomşu- komşu-neighbour

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CYPRIOT TURKISH

“The Turkish dialect spoken by Turkish Cypriots is closely related to other dialects of Anatolia, but distinct from the urban dialects of Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir. Turkish Cypriots faced few difficulties communicating with mainland Turks. The differences that exist were much less significant than those found between Turkish and other Turkic languages of Central Asia. Atatürk's language and educational reforms brought sweeping changes in standard Turkish. A Latin alphabet was introduced in place of the Arabic script, and the heavily Arabicized and Persianized

court dialect was rejected as the basis for standardization. The Turkish Cypriot community was the only Turkish minority in former Ottoman territories outside mainland Turkey to quickly adopt Atatürk's linguistic changes as well as the other revolutionary principles of his program" (Mongabay,1991).

It is known that Cyprus has a long historical past. It was governed by Venice and then the Ottoman Empire also governed by English people. The Turks that live in Cyprus was brought during the Ottoman Empire after 1571 from Konya, Sivas, Tokat, Amasya, Maraş, Aydın, İçel and Alanya. The dialect that was being used at that time was the dialect that they were being used in Turkey. The Turks were settled down into the cities and villages with Greeks. After that they created their own dialect, which was affected by Greeks and during the English government by English. In fact, the dialects of Cyprus has being affecting all through the history.

Between 1960-1974 almost every village and city had its own dialect. The old people informed the researcher that when they talk with people they can say where they are from. Like, if they make the end of the word long they are from Baphos (e.g. seni gelirkana gördüm- I saw you when you were coming).

After 1974 the Greeks and Turks were separated. Although the most Turks tried to migrate to their village and cities, they sometimes had to change their place according to the situations. Another new dialect era has started in each place that has revolutionized and survived until today.

2.2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A lot of time the Cypriot Dialect was handled foreigners and Cypriots made valuable works about it. Erdogan Saraçoğlu who is a linguist and Yılmaz Taşçı who is a Turkish Literature teacher made valuable works and published books about Cyprus Dialect. But Erdogan Saraçoğlu himself says that there are very few studies about Cyprus Dialect.

" Very few studies were done about Cyprus Dialect. The phonological characteristics of the dialect of Cyprus, which is the main subject of this study, were not handled and were not published enough." (Kıbrıs Ağzı, p.3,1980,Saraçoğlu E.)

Especially the dialects that are used throughout the Northern Cyprus were not handled separately. My study is the first attempt and I hope it illuminates to a path for other researchers..

3. METHOD

3.1. SUBJECTS

The research was done through the inhabitants of Nicosia (17), Famagusta (16) and Omorphou (17). The subjects were volunteers and sometimes a whole family participated. Their ages ranged from 15 to 72. Old, middle-aged and youth inhabitants were taken into consideration during the study and they were selected randomly. Their identities have been kept confidential. During the study each volunteer was given numbers in order to keep their names confidential.

3.2. MATERIALS

In order to collect the necessary data, the researcher had a discussion with volunteers. The researcher announced the study to the people she knows from these studies and they let people know. People who wanted to be to take part in this study signed an ethical form that they were volunteers and they could withdraw at any time but none did. These discussions took place 5 times with different volunteers usually in a house, which belongs to one of the volunteers. After meeting with each other they were very comfortable. The discussions were at a chat format rather than question- answer. Coulthard (1985) stated that ' speech events are the largest units for which one can discover linguistic structure.' The researcher and the subjects talked about their immigration choices in 1974 and their daily life and families. At each discussion, it was preferred to have at least one person from each city to see the differences better. During these chats tape recorder was used at times. Their speech was recorded down with their permission. In addition to that, the researcher asked three people, a young, a middle aged and an old from each city

to say the same sentence to measure the speed of the speech. Furthermore, their ideas about their dialect and immigration were taken as well. Also, they were asked if they realized any distinct differences between these cities not only during these chats but also in their daily lives.

4. DISCUSSION

The cultural construction of Turkish Cypriots has been changing for the last centuries due to conquests, wars and immigrations. Nevertheless, advanced developments and globalization are other factors contributing to this change. However, in the last 6 decades the main affect was the war in 1974. Today, Cyprus is a divided island between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriot communities. There have not only been lots of problems for Turkish Cypriots but also lots of administration changes for a long time. After 1974 the Greek and Turkish Cypriots were separated. Two different governments tried to put everything in order in their own ways. Although the most Turkish Cypriots tried to migrate to their villages and cities to be with the same community in which they used to live in, they sometimes had to change village therefore in a way the way they lived. Many Turkish people emigrated from Turkey as well after 1974. Houses were given lots of Turkish people from mainland. According to statistics about 13000 Turkish people settled in Cyprus between 1974 and 1975. A new dialect and cultural era has started in each place, and survived until today. These changes have affected the cultural identity of both communities and their traditions. Each volunteer gave some information how their dialect changed and the effect on their lives. Since 'The use of language for persuading and influencing others has probably always been important.' (Aitchison, 1999), this study focused on Turkish Cypriot dialects.

4.1. THE DIALECT OF NICOSIA

LEFKOŞA / NICOSIA

Loşalılar (colloquial)

Nicosia is the capital city of Northern Cyprus. There are lots of governmental offices and it is the main work area as well and naturally all ministries are here.

Since it is the capital and main work place, lots of people from different villages and from Turkey migrated there. Lots of people preferred to migrate here because of several reasons; it is the capital city, they used to live in South Nicosia so they wanted to be in the same city, it is the main work area, the industrial area is here, education.

According to number 11 (aged 68), it is possible to find immigrants almost from each village and city from South in Nicosia so it is possible to find different dialects from different villages. In 1974, they thought it would be easy to find a job and for their children's education. Number 27 (72) stated that they were asked to go to an office and choose a place to live. They were expected to go back so it was not important where as it would have been temporary. Number 26 (55) stated they wanted to live in a city not in a village anymore. Therefore, it is possible to find settlers in Nicosia from each village and city in South. The subjects of this study who live in Nicosia are from Nicosia mostly from Kaymakli, Limassol, Kofunye, Tatlisu, Ayvasil, Abohor in South. However, the subjects said there were people from almost each village in South except who stayed in their villages like Luricina. Nevertheless, even if you can find people from different villages and cities in Nicosia, the dialect of it, is closest to the standard Turkish. On the other hand, of course, it is quite different from standard Turkish phonologically. It has the typical Cypriot Turkish dialect such as the g sound exchanges with k sound (gonusalim- konusalim- let's talk, kirik-girik- broken, garala-karala- cross it out, kardeş-gardaş- sibling, garisma-karisma- don't interrupt, gahvalti-kahvalti- breakfast, gadar-kadar- until, gullan-kullan- use it, gacirdim-kacirdim- missed it, gal-kal- stay), the abbreviation of sounds (nere gidiyon- nereye gidiyorsun, where are you going) and the exchanging of i-e sounds (yiyecek-yeyceg- food, gene-yine- again, hade-hadi- let's), as the effect of English government especially old and middle aged subjects stated that they still use some English words by adding or changing some sounds (ispeyir- yedek- spare, boyler, su kaynatıcı, boiler) the adding of vowel sounds (sterlin- isterlin- sterling, rum-urum- greek), exchanging of t-d sounds (bitti-biddi- finished, şeftali-şefdali- peach, tatli-dadli- sweet, patates-badadez- potatoe, yapdin-yaptin- have you done, cekdim-cektim- I pulled, Allahdan- allahtan- Thanks to God, isder-ister- he wants, kacda-kacta- what time) and the adding of consonant sounds (avlu-havlı- garden).

However, the dialect of Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia do not obey to all of the typical Cypriot Turkish dialect.

Although, the old and middle-aged inhabitants of Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia use the forms that was mentioned above during their speech during the discussions, the youth use deeper Cypriot forms on purpose in order to be seen more sincere. Number 7 (aged 16) said if his friends do not use Turkish Cypriot dialect he thinks they are not sincere and do not become friends with them. As Rod Ellis stated social factors do not impact directly the way a person gets into communication but it affects it (Ellis, 2002). Moreover, the interesting fact about youth is they know a little gypsy language as well. At least they understand some words and they use it between each other. Number 12 (aged 19) gave an example; (*zanının afay1-tan1dın mı erkeđi-* you know that boy/man).

The most distinct difference is the speech duration. ; the Turkey our speech is very fast so that is why they cannot understand us. In Nicosia the duration of speech is the slowest one. (*Dun arkadasimdan kitap aldım sonra kaybettim gittim carsından yerine başka aldım.*) The duration of Speech of Nicosia= about 5 sec, the younger the faster.

When it was asked all the Turkish Cypriot settlers of Nicosia, they said they can easily differentiate a Cypriot from a Turkish even if s/he was born here. Middle aged subjects Number 17 (aged 57), number 11 (aged 68), number 27 (aged 72) and number 32 (aged 64) said they can even identify where they are from. However, young subjects under 40 said they cannot.

All subjects from Nicosia believes their dialect and they way they communicated is on of the best symbols of their Turkish Cypriot culture.

4.2. THE DIALECT OF FAMAGUSTA

MAGOSA / FAMAGUSTA

Gargacılar (Crow fanatics)

Famagusta is the second biggest city in Northern Cyprus. Like Nicosia there are lots of governmental offices and private companies. Mogosa is also known as the harbour city of North Cyprus since it is used for import and export by shipping. As it has its beaches, lots of people who used to live in villages around (Softades, Larnaka, Vasilya, Kofunye, Limya, Aynikola, Aysergi) immigrated here. Number 20 (aged 50) said when they had to leave their village, they started to stay with their relatives and there was a desk in front of a government office and they had to choose a house and the man who used to give out the houses told him, if you used to live in Vasilya, it is better for you to stay in Magosa so he just confirmed the man and they immigrated Magosa. Number 49 (aged 39) said they moved to Magosa because of his parents' work. Some other subjects informed the researcher that they preferred Magosa because of their family or neighbours.

Although their dialects is very close to the dialect of Nicosia, they use deeper Cypriot Turkish. It is very easy to realize the difference between two cities when you have a long conversation with them.

Although, they use the forms of Nicosia, which was mentioned above, their dialect is very close to the villagers' near Famagusta. For example they use z sound instead of s sound (*zebze-sebze-vegetable*. Even though the researcher did not hear this from the Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia, it is used in some areas of Nicosia as well. Moreover f sound instead of h sound (*sarfoş-sarhoş-drunk*, *mayfos-mayhos-sour*) and they add some consonant sounds to the end of some words (*sankim-sanki- if*, *acıbam-acaba-maybe*, *bilem-bile-even*, *gibin-gibi-like*) soft g sound instead of k (*gozugur-gozukur-it seems*,) and v sound instead of ğ sound (*dogan-dovan-was born*, *sovug-soğuk-cold*).Also they are more bound to shorten words (*neden- ne dersin- what do you say*, *nerden- nereden- from where*) nan instead of ile (*benimnan- benimle- with me*, *gendiynan- kendisiyle- with him*). Moreover, they speak a little quicker according to the inhabitants of Nicosia.

(*Dun arkadasimdan kitap aldım sonra kaybettim gittim carsından yerine başka aldım.*) The duration of Speech of Famagusta= about 4 sec like Turkish Cypriots in Nicosia the younger the speed of speech is faster.

We can find the same exaggeration between the youths, the youths of Famagusta use deeper Cypriot accent, when they asked they say, they find it more sincere. Number 18 (aged 20) stated he and his friends use *hayatcığın-hayatın-your life*, *gardaşcığım-kardeş-my man*, *hellimcik-hellim-halloumi* because he thinks it is friendlier and he

does not like to speak in other way. Number 28 (aged 27) added they add –cik at the end of the words to make it sound better.

When it was asked all the Turkish Cypriot settlers of Famagusta, they said they can easily differentiate a Cypriot from a Turkish even if s/he was born here as well. Middle aged subjects Number 20 (aged 50), number 42 (aged 71), and number 33 (aged 68) said they can even identify where Turkish Cypriots are from mostly. However, young subjects under 38 said they cannot identify like Turkish Cypriots from Nicosia.

On the other hand, teenagers do not know the gypsy language like the youth of Nicosia.

One subject from Magosa (number 20-aged 50) revealed that they are also called Gargacilar and told the story as lots of Magosa settlers had to stay in the castle during the war and they were very hungry and they had to catch and eat crows so their nickname is ‘Gargacilar (Crow catchers).

4.3.THE DIALECT OF MORPHOU

GÜZELYURT / MORPHOU

Omorfolular

Morphou is one of the cities of Cyprus. It is the most interesting city according to their dialect.

Morphou is a fast developing city, however, it carries many features of a village life as well. There are lots of farming vegetables, fruit and cattle herding. The inhabitants of Morphou are mostly from Baphos, Limasol and Larnaka and also a lot of gypsies settled down in Morphou. Number 36 (aged 40) informed the researcher that they immigrated here because their family wanted to continue farming and they were given orchards here. Another subject 38 (aged 56) stated that they wanted to be close to their village and continued farming.

Their dialect is very distinct from other cities. They use the deepest Cypriot accent and also the intonation and stress at each the word is very different. Although they use all the features of Cypriot Turkish dialect mentioned above, they have much more different dialect. Their intonation is mostly at the end of the words. They make long the end of the words (ikarkana-yıkarken- during the washing, gelirkana- gelirken- while coming, icerkene-icerken-while drinking),instead of the preposition ‘ile’ they use ‘-nan’

(gemiyan- gemi ile , by ship) and they add vowel sounds to the words (tavışan- tavşan- rabbit, gomuşu- komşu – neighbour) ,also they use ‘deyi’ instead of ‘diye’ (it means that’s why) ,c is used instead of j (caponya- japonya-japan, celi- jel- jelly) ,the interesting thing they say (ha) at the end of their sentences if they want to confirm it or to make it a question. Also they change some words even some other Turkish Cypriots ask what it means (ganirdi-gerildi-strected, cingicik, cok az, very little) (Gokceoglu, 2009, 2009a). Moreover they use lots of old Turkish or Greek (iskemli- sandalye- chair, piron-çatal- fork, drabeza-masa-table) and they think using some words from Greek language is not important (Pehlivan & Atamturk, 2006). They also speak too quickly.(Dun arkadasimdan kitap aldım sonra kaybettim gittim carsından yerine başka aldım.) The duration of Speech of Morphou= about 2.5 sec, the younger the faster again.

Furthermore, they use lots of gypsy words during their daily lives (kotor-para- money, genla-gel-come, afa-adam-man, elim-anne- mother). Number 10 (aged 44) claimed that the reason of this deepest accent is where people immigrated.

The youth of Morphou is more fanatic of gypsy language. Number 43 (aged 16) stated they use it everywhere especially if they do not want to be understood by other people.

The gypsies (çingene / cingane / gurbet / ole) in Cyprus need to be researched separately. It is known that they came Cyprus from Romania and India after 1300 and 1571. In Cyprus, the language they use today is a pidgin language. They mix their language with Turkish and Greek. They do not like using their own language because they feel they might be discriminated. Therefore, it is bound to die out (Pehlivan, 2009).

When it was asked all the Turkish Cypriot settlers of Guzelyurt, they said they can easily differentiate a Cypriot

from a Turkish even if s/he was born here. Middle aged subjects Number 38 (aged 56), number 9 (aged 69), number 15 (aged 70) and number 50 (aged 57) said they can even identify where they are from mostly like other middle-aged Turkish Cypriots. Young subjects under 40 Number 26 (aged 42) and number 29 (aged 43) said they can identify some but others said they cannot.

4.4.THE GEOGRAPHICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CITIES

When it is looked at the map of Cyprus , it is very clear that the cities are geographically very different from each other.

Nicosia , the capital of the Northern Cyprus is away from the sea and there are not many farms. Also, Nicosia is the biggest city in population in Northern Cyprus because it is a business center. There are lots of people working in the city's working areas. Furthermore, because it is the capital the government offices are in Nicosia as well.

Consequently, the dialect of the inhabitants of Nicosia is close to the standard, it is may be that the more educated people settled down in Nicosia or because of their work relations they try to use more clear forms.

Famagusta, which is the second biggest city of the Northern Cyprus, is near to the sea and it has lots of villages, which are very close to it. On the other hand, it has lots of business centers as well. Mostly they do not like travelling because they believe they do not need to, they have everything in their city. Maybe it is the reason that they use deeper Cyprus Turkish than Nicosia.

Morphou is a city but it is like to a village as well. Orange is grown in Morphou; it is the area of it. Besides this, they grow poultry and sheep etc. On the other hand, it is near to the sea and it has its business centers as well. The settlers of Morphou use kind of words for their work such as *fuşa-* bad orange, *sokuk-*bitten area of body by an insect, *gorug* –immature grape. Like Famagusta they do their works in Omorphou and they are happy with their dialect and they say they do not need to change it except talking to a Turkish from mainland (Saracoglu, 1980).

4.5. THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE DIALECTS

The most effective factor is age. The old, the middle-aged, the youth and the children of Cyprus have distinct dialects from each other. The dialect of the middle-aged people is closest to the standard but if they are educated. Consequently we can say education is another factor, but the youth tries to use the deepest Cyprus Turkish because they find it more sincere.

Background of the people is another important factor. The place where they were born and lived affects their dialect as well.

5. CONCLUSION

It can be easily said that Turkish Cypriots have their own dialect and this differs from place to place. They are aware of their dialect, culture and history. It would be right to say Turkish Cypriots strongly believe in themselves and they love their islands and they have better and friendlier relationships with each other. When they speak with each other they react very friendly and feel close to each other. As McCarthy (1994) put forward when 'we say a particular bit of speech ...we are concentrating on what that piece of language is doing, or how the listener is supposed to react.' It is very clear to see the social development in North Cyprus, as there are more educated people than the past. However, it can be said that all Turkish Cypriots have a schema in their mind of their culture due to their dialect. They use this schema to interpret what they hear and experience beforehand. According to Yule (1996) 'you do not have to be told what is normally found in a supermarket, you already have a supermarket schema.' Turkish Cypriots have a schema how Turkish Cypriots are and they can mostly differentiate who is not. They all defined themselves as Turkish Cypriots even if they have different dialect from each other, they do not refer themselves as from Nicosia, Omorphou or Famagusta, they refer themselves as Turkish Cypriots. Ross (2011) in his study stated that Turkish Cypriots identified themselves as K.K.T.C./T.R.N.C. Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

The way we speak has a great impact on our relations and on our culture, therefore, it has consequences on a person's life later on (Giles & Coupland 1991).

Since the duration of this study was relatively very short and the sampling used were low and it is well known that a linguistic research needs at least 3 or 4 months and the sampling should at least represent the parameter. Shortly, this study focused on a small, specific population, and therefore, data may not be generalized. However, it shows that dialect is a great effect on culture.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

According to this study, more data can be collected and can be integrated together under the umbrella of a well-designed map. Cyprus has its own culture and literature and should have a dialect map as well as its own literature. Since dialect is a very strong effect on the culture of a country, it should be researched more.

This research also strongly recommends that Cyprus Turkish should have its own dictionary and a dialect map.

7. FURTHER RESEARCH

It is recommended that further research could be carried out which background; attitude, interest, culture and literature of Cypriots are considered. This would enable audience to judge the differences better.

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